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15	State of Arizona, <i>ex rel</i> . Kristin K. Mayes,	Case No.: 4:23-cv-00233-TUC-CKJ
16	Attorney General, et al.,	
17	Plaintiffs,	
18	V.	PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSIVE BRIEF
19	Michael D. Lansky, L.L.C., dba Avid	ON DISCOVERY DISPUTES
20	Telecom, et al.,	
21	Defendants.	
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MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

Defendants' Opening Brief outlined several concerns regarding Plaintiffs' objections to Defendants' First Requests for Production ("RFPs"), Defendants' First Requests for Admissions ("RFAs") and Plaintiffs' Responses to Defendants' Rule 30(b)(6) defective deposition notices. Plaintiffs submit this Responsive Brief and in turn note: (1) Plaintiffs met and conferred with defense counsel in good faith, fully prepared to address all issues of concern to Defendants; (2) Plaintiffs have not withheld any non-privileged responsive documents despite their good faith objections; (3) Defendants' 30(b)(6) deposition notices were facially defective; (4) the record shows Plaintiffs consistently indicated a willingness to meet and confer on issues of Defendants' concern; and (5) Plaintiffs' Responses to Defendants' RFAs are true and issued in good faith.

II. <u>ARGUMENT</u>

a. <u>Defendants' Brief Relies on Misrepresentations and Procedurally</u> <u>Deficient, Inadmissible Evidence.</u>

Defendants' Opening Brief is predicated on the false claim that Plaintiffs have obstructed discovery, by imposing "direct and indirect barriers to all forms of discovery sought by Defendants" and preventing "the pursuit of a meaningful direct meet and confer process." In support, Defendants rely on the unsigned and self-serving Declaration of Greg Taylor, which – without any documentary evidence – asserts that during the parties' July 15, 2025 telephonic meet and confer, Plaintiffs' counsel prevented him from offering substantive input, refused to engage on any substantive issues, failed to provide any substantive responses, and engaged in "overspeaking" for approximately 20 minutes until he was forced to unilaterally terminate the call. *See, e.g.*, Dkt #138-1.

In reality, the July 15, 2025 meet-and-confer lasted for more than 40 minutes, during which Plaintiffs' counsel substantively addressed Defendants' perceived issues with Plaintiffs' responses to Defendants' Rule 30(b)(6) deposition notices, Defendants' RFPs and Defendants' RFAs. *See* Declaration of Sarah Pelton, dated September 8, 2025

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("Decl.") at ¶ 6, Exs. II-JJ. At no point did Plaintiffs' counsel refuse to engage, decline to provide substantive responses or engage in any "abusive" behavior. *Id.* at Ex. JJ. Rather it was defense counsel who appeared unprepared, having failed to provide the promised outline of Defendants' disputed issues in advance of the meet-and -confer. *Id.* And when pressed for factual or legal support for the few positions he did articulate, defense counsel had none. Defendants' mischaracterization of the parties' meet-and-confer only underscore the lack of a good-faith basis for their discovery positions.

b. In Addition to being Factually Inaccurate, the Declaration of Greg Taylor is Procedurally Defective.

Under Rule 11(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, every paper filed with the Court must be signed by at least one attorney of record in the attorney's name. An unsigned declaration is a nullity and must be stricken unless promptly corrected. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 11(a). On September 3, 2025, Plaintiffs alerted defense counsel to the deficient, unsigned Declaration of Greg Taylor. *See* Decl. at ¶ 10, Ex. QQ. The following day, September 4, 2025, defense counsel acknowledged Plaintiffs' notice and represented that a "substantive reply" would be forthcoming by close of business Friday, September 5, 2025. *Id.* at ¶ 11, Ex. RR. To date, however, defense counsel has neither corrected the deficiency in Mr. Taylor's declaration, nor otherwise provided any "substantive reply". *Id.* at ¶ 12. Because the Declaration of Greg Taylor remains unsigned and uncorrected, it must be stricken pursuant to Rule 11(a) and Local Rule 7.2(m)(2).

c. <u>Defendants Mischaracterize Plaintiffs' Responses and the Current Document Production.</u>

i. <u>Plaintiffs Provided Specific, Substantiated Objections to the</u> <u>Overbreadth and Vagueness of Certain Requests.</u>

Defendants' assertion that Plaintiffs "failed to provide specific evidence or reasoning to support" their objections to Requests Nos. 1-45, 48, and 51 is false. In each of their objections, Plaintiffs identified the overbroad term(s) and stated their reasoning.

¹ In the event defense counsel files a corrected, signed declaration repeating the same false allegations, Plaintiffs will seek appropriate relief under Rule 11(b) and Rule 11(c).

Frequently, Plaintiffs asserted concerns of overbreadth when Defendants used blanket, undefined terms that could be interpreted so broadly as to be burdensome to produce (i.e. "data" in Request No. 19 could refer to many, very different kinds of information). Plaintiffs also objected to Requests that failed to include a temporal limitation, e.g. Requests Nos. 1-23, 29-32, 45, 48, and 51. As yet another example, Plaintiffs objected as overbroad to Request No. 51 for all press releases made by each state law action state about any Defendant, as this publicly-available information is equally available and less expensive for Defendants to obtain without the need to issue a Request. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(1) (contemplating the parties' relative access to relevant information).

ii. <u>Plaintiffs' Relevance Objections are Well-Founded and Proffered</u> in Good Faith.

First, Plaintiffs wish to establish that they have withheld no documents from production on the basis of their relevance objections to Requests Nos. 29-32, 43-45, 48, and 51. That being said, Plaintiffs stand behind their objections.

Defendants state that Requests Nos. 29-32 seek documents providing data regarding when the Called Party obtained the telephone number and whether from the predecessor owner of that telephone number consented to receive the calls at issue. The date on which the Called Party obtained the service for a particular number is irrelevant to whether the call violated the law on the date the call was made, as it is not an element or burden of proof for either party. Whether a predecessor owner of the telephone number gave consent to be called is also irrelevant. When the Called Party obtained the service is irrelevant to Defendants' burden to show that the caller had consent to call when the call was made and received.²

Defendants' Requests Nos. 43 and 44 seek information regarding Defendant Reeves' relationship to Defendant Avid Telecom. Defendants claim it is "inconceivable" that Plaintiffs could have offered a relevance objection to these topics in good faith.

² The Called Party for the purpose of consent is the *current* subscriber of the telephone number, not the previous one. *See N.L. by Lemos v. Credit One Bank, N.A.*, 960 F.3d 1164, 1167-1172 (9th Cir. 2020) (defendant's intent to call a customer who had previously consented to its calls did not exempt defendant from liability under the TCPA when it called someone else who did not consent).

Plaintiffs refute Defendants' statement that Defendant Reeves' liability is based entirely on her alleged status as an employee of Avid Telecom. Defendant Reeves' employment status is not dispositive of the larger issue of liability. Defendant Reeves is not relieved of liability if she is not found to be an employee of Defendant Avid Telecom. Defendant Reeves could also be individually responsible or liable under an agency theory by virtue of her personal participation in the acts and practices that violated federal and state rules and statutes.³ Defendants proffered no argument in their opening brief as to why Request 45 is relevant – Plaintiffs maintain it is not dispositive of any claim or defense.

Defendants argue that Requests Nos. 48 and 51 could be potential admissions against interest, including publications of fact contrary to allegations in the complaint. Plaintiffs would like to reiterate that press releases are, by their nature, publicly available. There is no claim by Plaintiffs or Defendants or counterclaim from Defendants that is relevant to the content of any press releases. Further, Plaintiffs produced the press releases despite having no obligation to produce publicly available materials, subject to the objection that the press releases are not relevant or necessarily admissible.

iii. <u>Plaintiffs Have No Duty to Provide Damage Calculations under</u> the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

Defendants state that Plaintiffs have an obligation to support their claims under Rule 26(a)(1)(A)(iii), and further failed to make a timely disclosure of damages under Rule 26(a)(1)(C). Plaintiffs' Complaint, in the Prayer for Relief section, as well as Plaintiffs' initial disclosures served September 6, 2024 set forth the remunerative relief sought for each category of damages for each count. *See* Plaintiffs' Initial Rule 26(a)(1) Disclosures at 34-36. The applicable statutory damages and civil penalties will be determined at trial as to the type and number of violations. The Plaintiffs have no obligation to undertake legal research or organize factual evidence for Defendants to provide a calculation of the respective potential statutory civil penalties that may be applicable for each count of Plaintiffs' Complaint. Additionally, many of the initial calculations cited in Plaintiffs'

³ See Conformed Complaint at ¶¶ 404-416.

Complaint are based on a preliminary analysis of Defendants' call detail records which are equally, if not more readily available, to Defendants.

To be sure, even if Plaintiffs had a duty to provide greater detail on the disclosures of damages provided under Rule 26(a)(1)(iii), Defendants' timing is much too late as the Court required the exchange of initial disclosures on September 6, 2024. *See* Dkt. #84 at 3.

iv. Plaintiffs Do Not Need to Produce a Privilege Log.

Plaintiffs have not produced a privilege log because they have not withheld any documents on the basis of privilege that are required to be logged pursuant to Section F of the ESI Order [Dkt. #120]. Plaintiffs have objected to certain Requests on the basis of privilege, but no privilege log need be made pursuant to F(1)(e) of the ESI Order [Dkt. #120].

d. Defendants Served Facially Defective Rule 30(b)(6) Deposition Notices.

As to Defendants' Rule 30(b)(6) notices, Defendants' opening brief fails to address – let alone refute – the fact that the deposition notices served to 49 Plaintiffs were facially defective under Rules 30(b)(1) and 30(b)(6) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Rule 30(b)(1) requires the party seeking the deposition to specify the date and time of the 30(b)(6) deposition. See Fed. R. Civ. P. 30(b)(1) ("[T]he notice must state the time and place of the deposition, and, if known, the deponent's name and address."). Plaintiffs responded and objected to each Notice, as the Notices failed to specify the date and time of the 30(b)(6) deposition in violation of Rule 30(b)(1). For proper service, Rule 30(b)(6) requires the serving party to name as the deponent "a public or private corporation, a partnership, an association, a governmental agency, or other entity". See Fed. R. Civ. P. 30(b)(6). Here, the Notices served to Plaintiffs failed to do so. Plaintiffs noted this in their individual Responses to Defendants' 30(b)(6) Notices. See Decl. at ¶ 4, Ex. GG.

Indeed, the Lead Plaintiff States and the eleven Plaintiff States that brought state law claims do not object to Rule 30(b)(6) depositions of properly identified, relevant topics that otherwise comport with Rules 26 and 30 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and

other applicable state and federal laws. Rather, the Plaintiffs object to Defendants' insistence that Plaintiffs designate witnesses in advance of the parties resolving disputes as to the topics identified. As such, Plaintiffs need to know the nature and scope of the topics subject to examination in order to designate the appropriate witnesses.

Plaintiffs' written objections, each labeled as "Response to Topic (-)," pertained to the substance of the specific topics identified, not merely to the designation of a knowledgeable witness. Decl. at Ex. GG. Further, Defendants' opening brief fails to address or refute Plaintiffs' specific objections to each of the substantive topics identified, namely, overbreadth. Many of Defendants' topics sought each AG's office to disclose either the investigation it conducted that formed the basis for its complaint (i.e., attorney work product) or discussions AG's offices had internally or with other law enforcement agencies, which are privileged. These topics seem to support a malicious prosecution claim Defendants have teased, although Defendants have not been brought the claim in any defense or counterclaim. As such, these topics are irrelevant and not dispositive of the claims at issue. Additionally, Defendants' topics are unduly burdensome, cumulative, and seek oral testimony on topics that are more appropriately addressed using written discovery as most of Plaintiffs' evidence are records obtained from third parties or will be supported through expert witnesses. The ESI Order was entered after Plaintiffs' objections were served and since that time, Plaintiffs have produced over 90,000 documents responsive to Defendants' 685 RFPs that are relevant to the topics identified in the deposition notices.⁴ Plaintiffs' document production includes an index identifying the RFP to which the documents are responsive. Plaintiffs' objections are valid, specific, and narrowly tailored to the fundamental defects of Defendants' deposition topics. As relayed to Defendants in May of 2025, Plaintiffs will designate appropriate witnesses upon agreement by the parties as to the nature and scope of relevant topics that comport with Rule 26 and 30 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

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⁴ Plaintiffs' document production includes an index identifying the RFPs to which the documents are responsive.

Finally, Defendants claim Plaintiffs have refused to meet and confer on any of their objections. This is not so. As early as April 25, 2025, Lead States emailed defense counsel seeking to limit the topics in each Plaintiff State's Notice. Decl. at ¶ 3, Ex. FF. The Lead States never received a response and thus sent their written Objections to defense counsel. In each State's Objection document, Plaintiffs stated their willingness to meet and confer. Decl. at ¶ 4, Ex. GG. Furthermore, Plaintiffs engaged in a meet and confer on July 15, 2025, where defense counsel addressed Rule 30(b)(6) issues. Decl. at ¶ 6, Ex. II-JJ. When defense counsel sent their 139-page meet and confer letter after the July 15 meet and confer, Plaintiffs responded and reiterated their willingness to meet and confer on 30(b)(6) issues. Decl. at ¶ 7, Exs. KK-NN. Additionally, in Exhibit II of Defendants' Opening Brief, Defendants did not include the full email conversation to date. Two days after defense counsel sent the email in their Exhibit II to Plaintiffs, Plaintiffs responded in full. Decl. at ¶ 7, Ex. MM-NN. Plaintiffs see this as yet another one of Defendants' attempts to

mischaracterize the record.

e. <u>Plaintiffs' Responses to Defendants' RFAs are True, Supported, and Comply with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.</u>

i. Plaintiffs Stand by Responses 5 and 6.

Defendants' First RFAs Nos. 5 and 6 relate to Plaintiffs' alleged communications with regulatory authorities about Defendant Avid Telecom's calls. Plaintiffs are without knowledge because Plaintiffs are not aware of the inner workings of every State agency within their respective jurisdictions and what actions those agencies may or may not have taken in regard to Defendants.

ii. Responses 18-20 are Clear and Address the Respective Requests.

Defendants' First RFAs Nos. 18-20 relate to the terms and conditions of YouMail, a third party telecommunications agency. Plaintiffs' Responses to Requests 18 and 20 direct Defendants to YouMail's Terms of Service and show that Plaintiffs have individual subscribers' permission to access those subscribers' recordings. Plaintiffs' Response to Request 19 is a complete admission that addresses Defendants' Request, that certain data

referenced in the Complaint involved calls placed to YouMail subscribers. Plaintiffs are unsure how they are not addressing the "substance" of the Requests as Defendants so state.

f. Plaintiffs' Issued Discovery is Reasonable Given Defendants' Repeated Obstruction.

Defendants' flagrant abuse of their discovery obligations and persistent obstructive tactics have caused significant delays in this case. Over the course of this litigation, Plaintiffs issued only one set of discovery Requests for Production on each Defendant, to which Plaintiffs are *still* awaiting meaningful responses that comport with Defendants' obligations to participate in the litigation and defense counsel's obligations to comply with the Rules of Professional Conduct. To date, Plaintiffs have received approximately 320 documents from Defendant Reeves and no production at all from Defendant Avid Telecom or Defendant Lansky. Decl. at ¶ 5, Ex. HH.

The Requests for Admission issued by Plaintiffs on August 25, 2025 are relevant to claims addressed in the Complaint – the responses to which lie within Defendants' knowledge. Defendants' respective admissions are necessary noting their absence of responsive production regarding Plaintiffs' outstanding discovery requests. In light of the lack of production from Defendants, asking Defendants to admit to facts they know to be true about the business they conducted is squarely within Plaintiffs' ability in a reciprocal discovery process.

Defendants' characterization of Plaintiffs' actions as to "economically cripple Defendants" is completely unfounded. Defense counsel chose to undertake representation in a multistate litigation involving 49 Plaintiff States and a myriad of state and federal statutes. To insist that Plaintiffs are attempting to make the discovery process more onerous is yet another of defense counsel's attempts to falsify the record and undermine Plaintiffs' ability to prosecute their case. Tellingly, defense counsel omits the fact Defendants issued hundreds of discovery requests on Plaintiffs in the last month – over 570 Requests for Production in Defendants' Second RFPs; the RFPs set forth in Defendants' First and Third

RFPs and Defendant Reeves' First RFPs; and Defendants' First RFAs and Defendant Reeves' First RFAs.

In an effort to decrease Defendants' claimed burden, Plaintiffs emailed defense counsel on August 28, 2025 and offered to withdraw 84 Requests from Plaintiffs' First Set of RFAs issued to each Defendant if Defendants agreed to three stipulations. Decl. at ¶ 8, Exs. OO-PP. No Defendant has yet responded to this offer. Decl. at ¶ 9.

III. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

For the reasons set out above and in Plaintiffs' Opening Brief on Discovery Disputes [Dkt. #134], Plaintiffs respectfully request judicial relief to overcome Defendants' flagrant abuse and contempt of the discovery process to date, including leave to file motions to compel and the appointment of a magistrate to ensure Defendants' compliance with their discovery obligations going forward.

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RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 8th day of September 2025.

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Pursuant to FEDERAL RULE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE 5(a), I hereby certify that on September 08, 2025, a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing document has been served using the CM/ECF system to all counsel and parties of record.

/s/ Belen O. Miranda